United Nations A/61/719

General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 January 2007

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Agenda item 105 (e)
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fourteen members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 23 January 2007 from the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to announce the candidature of the Republic of Slovenia to the Human Rights Council in the elections to be held in May 2007, during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

The Republic of Slovenia is strongly committed to the protection and promotion of human rights worldwide and strives continuously, constructively and progressively for the universality and full implementation of all human rights norms and standards. Human rights represent an important chapter of the Slovenian Constitution and also constitute one of the key pillars of Slovenia's foreign policy. Slovenia's pledges and commitments in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 are enclosed to the present note (see annex).

07-22482 (E) 010207

Annex to the note verbale dated 23 January 2007 from the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Aide memoire

Candidature of Slovenia for the Human Rights Council

Voluntary pledges and commitments (based on General Assembly resolution 60/251)

The Republic of Slovenia is putting forward its candidature for the membership of the Human Rights Council at the upcoming elections to be held in May 2007, during the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Slovenia's very existence is rooted in the popular strive for democracy and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Slovenia has continuously strived, as a matter of policy, to contribute constructively and progressively to the universal promotion and protection of human rights.

Human rights provisions represent 1/3 of all provisions of the Slovenian Constitution. Further, the Chapter of the Slovenian Constitution entitled "Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" is placed as Chapter 2, directly after the General Provisions of the Constitution. Human Rights also constitute one of the key pillars of Slovenia's foreign policy.

Full support for and cooperation with the Human Rights Council

Slovenia has strongly supported the idea of a new Human Rights Council since it has first been suggested, has actively participated in its creation and welcomed the establishment of the Human Rights Council, including its innovative features, such as the universal scrutiny for all. Slovenia has followed the first year of the operation of the new Council in the observer capacity attentively.

In 2002, Slovenia issued a standing and open invitation to the mandate holders of special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights. We have been and remain fully committed to cooperation with the special procedures and relevant mechanisms.

Slovenia pledges

- to continue to support mainstreaming of human rights into all aspects of UN activities, including through communication between the HRC and other UN bodies;

- to continue to work on the strengthening of the relationship between the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, in particular the Third Committee, as necessary, as well as other relevant UN bodies;

- to cooperate fully with the procedures and mechanism of the HRC, including through visits of special procedures, on the basis of their own terms of reference, to reply to all letters of allegation received from them, and to invest efforts to implement the recommendations that they will have addressed to Slovenia;

- to contribute to the creation and functioning of universal periodic review and to pledge to undergo its review;

- not to resort to procedural means to stop addressing of substantive issues in the Human Rights Council;

- to endeavour that the HRC provides an adequate response to human rights crises, when they occur, based on recommendations for action from UN human rights mechanisms and to further endeavour that the HRC provides a sustainable attention of the international community in situations where human rights crises persist;

- to promote the development of human rights norms, where required and relevant, starting with the commitment for an early signing the Convention on Enforced Disappearances, adopted on 20 December 2006, and to adopt the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples;

- to insist on and be accessible for good, transparent and timely exchange of information and views between member and observer States.

Reaffirming the support to the Office of UNHCHR, other UN agencies, international and regional organizations - promoting human rights approach

Slovenia used to and will continue to support the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Slovenia supported the doubling of the Office's regular budget financing by 2010 so as to enable it to strengthen its work by assisting states in their implementation of human rights norms and standards.

Slovenia pledges

- to continue to increase its voluntary contributions to the Office of the UNHCHR;

- to continue to provide, to the best of its abilities, voluntary contributions to the rest of the United Nations Human Rights System;

- to promote human rights based approach in its support to UN activities and in its engagement in the governmental bodies of UNICEF, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNHCR, WHO and FAO, as well as to IOM and ILO, and within regional organizations, such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

International Human Rights Instruments and submission of periodic reports - implementation at the national level

Slovenia remains committed to the aims and principles of the UN Charter, norms and standards emanating from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and other *international instruments in the field of human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law.*

Slovenia succeeded or ratified major international instruments in the field of human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law, including

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols;
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its Optional Protocol;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols;
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol;
- four Geneva Conventions and their two Additional Protocols;
- the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;
- the Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
- Convention on the Status of Refugees and its Protocol;
- Slovenia signed the Additional Protocol III to the Geneva Conventions, which is to be ratified in the near future;
- Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Person and Slovenia also signed its Optional Protocol, which is to be ratified in the near future.

Slovenia has no reservations to any of these treaties.

Slovenia also succeeded or ratified 75 ILO Conventions, including all 8 core ILO Conventions.

According to the Slovenian Constitution, these international legal instruments are directly applicable in the Slovenian legal order.

Slovenia accepted being a subject to all communication procedures of the United Nations human rights treaties it has ratified.

Slovenia regularly submits periodic reports required by the human rights treaties and takes steps to publicize and follow-up within Slovenia on treaty bodies' concluding observations and recommendations.

Slovenia has an active and independent national human rights institution – Human Rights Ombudsman – providing independent assessment of the national implementation of human rights

obligations and standards. Ombudsman's annual report on human rights situation in Slovenia is a public document, also available in English (www.varuh-rs.si).

Slovenia pursues regular dialogue with the civil society on human rights issues in its foreign policy. Slovenia further supports the inclusion of strong, free and independent civil society's voice in the efforts aimed at improvement of human rights situation nationally, regionally and internationally. We will continue to promote an inclusive approach with regard to the work of the Council.

Slovenia pledges

- *upon having signed, to quickly ratify the Additional Protocol III to the Geneva Conventions;*
- *to sign and ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol;*
- *to sign and ratify the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;*

Slovenia firmly believes that the promotion and implementation of economic, social and cultural rights is an integral and extremely important part of the overall human rights regime and pledges to continue to actively demonstrate its support for the drafting of an Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to provide a communication procedure to the set of rights emanating from this treaty.

Slovenia pledges to continue to submit regularly periodic reports to the human rights treaty bodies and to assure follow-up, including dissemination and publication within Slovenia of the recommendations and comments made by those bodies and concrete activities aimed at their effective implementation .

Ljubljana, 17 January 2007